



What do you call a person who is happy on a Monday?.... RETIRED!!!

After many years in the free-community paper industry, the most recent as the office manager of Midwest Free Community Papers, Vickie Weingartz, our Office Manager, is retiring.

We underwent a lot of transition these past two years and without a doubt, Vickie is the “glue” that held us together. She made sure all of the important association work was completed correctly and on time.

I would like to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU to Vickie for all of her hard work and dedication. We have learned, grown, and become stronger as an organization and Vickie has played a key role in this transformation. We have shared a wonderful working relationships with her and made a friendship that will always be treasured.

From the Board of Directors and all of the Midwest Free Community Paper Members, we send our best wishes to Vickie and her family for happiness and good fortune throughout her retirement. Thank you for bringing out the best in us!

We have a long-time member who is retiring, too....Rich Paulson, Creston, Iowa is leaving the industry after 42 years. Last week in a call with Rich he shared with Lee some info about newsprint pricing. She asked that he write the info out so that it could be shared with everyone. He did so, and here's a link.

[Current Newsprint situation - Rich Paulsen](#)

Jodi Peterson



From the office...

Like you, I feel the pressure of having so much to do – and so little time to get it done. I find it helps to make a list and prioritize it. Then I can work my way through the top priority items making sure I don't get distracted by tasks of lesser importance.

There are a few things MFCP-wise that I want you to be aware of, so I've made a list and I even went ahead and prioritized it for you too! (yeah, you're welcome!!)

#1) DUES RENEWAL AND MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY (yeah, that's really two things).

Your dues invoices are already in the mail. You'll note two additional things in this year's packet: #1) a coupon to save \$50 off the cost of your dues if you mail your check no later than June 30th, 2021. #2) a copy of your publication data including contact info for key positions. Please update this info and send it back to us ASAP as we are preparing to create the 2021 Membership Directory and want to make certain we have the most up-to-date info possible.

#1) DOG DAYS OF SUMMER –

Our Cabin Fever Sweepstakes was so successful that we're doing something similar this summer. MFCP will be sponsoring the Dog Days of Summer this July. This is a sweepstakes promotion in which lucky readers have the opportunity to win \$1,500 from MFCP. We've structured the promotion so that it works for weekly or monthly publications. It's easier to explain the promo in person – so, please shoot me an email and let's set a time to chat. You'll be glad you did!

#1) MFCP/ACP JOINT CONFERENCE

Have you marked your calendar for September 17th and 18th yet? If not, please do so as that's when MFCP will partner with **ACP** to bring a stellar conference to Des Moines. It's not often that a national conference ends up in the Midwest so this is an especially nice opportunity for you and your team. As always we will offer a wide variety of classes and learning opportunities as well as top-notch speakers and tremendous social hours. Please set aside the time on your calendar now – and we look forward to seeing you there!

#1) CVC SALES PROPOSAL TOOL

As a member of MFCP that participates in the MCN classified program you are entitled to a free CVC readership audit. The MFCP board has created an app of sorts that uses your readership data to create customized one-page sales proposals. These are amazing! [Click here to see a sample.](#) And, contact me when you're ready to know how to access the data for your publication.

#1) A NEW MCN Special –

Employment is hot right now and customers are looking to extend their reach and the length of their run. That's where the MCN Employment ad special comes in. You can place a 30-word MCN classified ad for as little as \$249 per week and reach over 1.9 million homes. But, wait, there's more – from now until the end of September

advertisers can buy three weeks and receive the 4th week free! That's a pretty awesome deal and one I hope you encourage your advertisers to take advantage of.

So, there you have it...my top five things for you to take note of and act on. You may have noticed that they are all rated #1 and there's a very good reason for that. Simply, they are all super important! So, I know you're busy – but, please make every effort to work your way through the list. And, if you can only find time for one or two – be sure you do #1!

Lee
888-899-6327

Publisher's Roundtable

Our June publishers' call will be held Thursday, June 16th at 9AM. Our featured revenue idea will be: Community Newsletters –by Greg Birkett.

The Zoom info stays the same from month to month. It is shown below.

Topic: PUBLISHER'S ROUNDTABLE

Time: Thursday, May 13th at 9AM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89536727860?pwd=bjVzTlpKWj84b1dwTXdjbE4vb05lQT09>

Meeting ID: 895 3672 7860

Passcode: 626106

Dial by your location

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+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)



“What is the core value of your publication?”

By Bob Berting, Berting Communications

Your salespeople are telling your prospects and customers that you are the best newspaper in town or if you're the only newspaper, you're the best media choice in town. They go on to say you have the best customer service in town. But what is your core value? What is the value you bring to the marketplace that no one else can bring? What impact does that value have on the prospect, not intellectually, but emotionally? What value do you bring that will compel your prospect to ask you to fix their problems.

Principles of contemporary selling

Cut down on selling emphasis and begin using psychology and philosophy to translate your value. When you stop selling, your prospect will feel prone to open up and give you the reasons why he or she needs you to fix his or her problems. Isn't that what we want anyway? Salespeople who sell hard and relentlessly sometimes don't understand human nature—and it costs them. You still do your dog and pony show to sleepy eyes. Stop the show and ask questions about their problems and existing conditions. A key question is: **“Are there conditions or problems in your company that you think our publication can help you with?”** Let them talk.

Never underestimate the propensity to purchase

You have seen this happen. A prospective advertiser will balk at spending \$1500.00, then turn around and spend \$2500.00 with a competitor. Why? Because the belief was there. The energy was there. The money is always there. Money is conceptual. Many times, the danger is that salespeople will make decisions for the prospect before they do. Don't make the decision for the prospect before they do. Don't make the decision for the prospect about anything, especially money. Also, sometimes the more one pays for something, the more value they attach to it—providing the value is actually there. The world is full of buyers who have bought half a solution only because of the salesperson's fear to talk in larger terms that would have solved the entire problem of the prospect or customer.

Never let your fears affect your selling

Often, we won't ask the question because we're afraid of the answer. The prospect is telling you about a severe problem he has. You need to ask

“What have you previously done to solve this problem?” By asking, you will be finding out an important part of his values—his own fear. From that, you can determine the best corrective action to take.

Don't overwhelm your prospect

You have tremendous knowledge about your publication—type styles, printing press capability, demographic statistics, website benefits, etc. You feel good about what you know and you want to start spouting all this information to the prospect. Many times, the reaction to all this rhetoric is actually wearing the customer out. Never wear out the one with the check.

So you know everything there is to know about newspaper advertising. But many times you don't know the customer's compelling problems that need to be solved—and you need to know them.

Bob Berting's new e-book #4 for advertising salespeople

Bob is the author of 4 best-selling e-books for the newspaper industry Bob's newest e-book “**Smart Customer Connections For Advertising Salespeople**” is a publication that is very relative and helpful for print media salespeople dealing with their customers in today's CoronaVirus atmosphere. You can order any of Bob's books on his website: www.bobberting.com.

Read Bob's e-books and discover how his vast experience and know-how can help you achieve much more business for you and your publication. You'll greatly benefit from the wisdom of one of America's top advertising sales experts.

Bob is a professional speaker, advertising sales trainer, publisher marketing consultant, and leading columnist in many national and regional newspaper trade association publications. He is the President of Berting Communications and can be reached at bob@bobberting.com or 317-849-5408.



12 Ad Copy Tips

By John Foust, Raleigh, NC

Once an ad's graphic design attracts readers' eyes, it has to say something of value. Otherwise, readers will skip the ad and miss the message completely. Here are a dozen copywriting tips to gain and hold attention:

- 1. Don't try to appeal to everyone.** Every large group (newspaper readers, for example) is composed of smaller groups (homeowners, parents, accountants, etc.). When you clearly define a specific target audience, you'll be able to tailor the advertising to fit their needs.
- 2. Make the headline sell.** According to research, four out of five people don't read beyond an ad's headline. This means the headline has to do a lot of the heavy lifting. Its primary purpose is to convince readers to keep reading to learn more about the product being advertised.
- 3. Give relevant information.** Before they make buying decisions, consumers need to know the answers to several key questions: who, what, when, where, why and how much does it cost?

- 4. Use simple language.** Readers lose interest when they encounter complicated terminology or long explanations. When that happens, they turn the page or click the button – and the advertiser loses. It’s best to keep things simple.
- 5. Say or imply “you.”** Readers care more about themselves than about anyone else. That’s human nature. And that’s why the focus should always be on the consumer, not the advertiser. “How you can save on your heating bill” is a better message than “How we cut heating bills.”
- 6. Use product benefits to appeal to readers’ self-interest.** This is a sensible way to keep the focus on “you.” People don’t buy features, they buy benefits. They don’t buy products, they buy what those products can do for them.
- 7. Don’t exaggerate.** Advertisers lose credibility with words like “unbelievable,” “fantastic” and “incredible.” Consumers simply don’t believe that kind of puffery. And they are likely to disbelieve everything else those advertisers say, even if some of those things are true.
- 8. Don’t make unsubstantiated claims.** When advertisers say their products have certain attributes or accomplish certain results, they should support those statements with evidence. That could be in the form of data, examples or testimonials.
- 9. Limit exclamation marks.** One sign of weak writing is the overuse of exclamation marks. If numerous sentences require special punctuation to sound important, it would have been better to use more important words instead. Take a look at national advertising, and you may not see any exclamation marks at all.
- 10. Don’t criticize the competition.** When an advertiser blasts competitors, it looks like sour grapes. Comparisons are much more believable. Some ads even feature charts with point-by-point comparisons of specific features.
- 11. Create urgency.** If you’re running a response ad (as opposed to an image ad), give people a reason to buy immediately. Is inventory limited? Will the offer expire soon?
- 12. Ask readers to take specific action.** What do you want people to do when they finish reading an ad? Stop by the store today? Call for information? Place their orders now? Don’t make them guess. Tell them.

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CREDIT LINE

John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. E-mail for information: john@johnfoust.com



Helping Advertisers Prepare for the Buying Bump , 10 Ideas to Update Your Media Sales Game

Ryan Dohrn

All research points to a buying bump that is set to occur. We see citizens getting back to some level of normalcy, signaling that many buying habits will soon come back into play. Yet, our advertisers are still throwing us the same COVID-based objections. Do they not want to get back to business? Why is it so hard for them to grasp that advertising starts the process to get customers back in the door?

I believe that business owners are suffering from a sort of PTSD over the massive shock to their businesses that the COVID pandemic dealt them over the last 12 months. So, how do we help them? The first step is to understand them.

As a media sales rep myself, I have the chance to speak to advertisers daily. I also have the unique opportunity to coach media sales reps around the globe. Sarah in Singapore, Peter and his team in Australia, John and his colleagues up in Toronto, and of course my teams here in the United States. They all report a distinct change in their advertisers over the last 12 months.

For the last three years, each Friday I have asked a group of my coaching clients to answer this multiple-choice question: What type of advertiser attitudes did you come across last week? Their response options have been 1.) advertisers making ego-driven advertising decisions, 2.) advertisers making logical-based ad buying decisions, and 3.) advertisers making decisions based on emotion and how they feel at the moment.

This past week when I asked the question, 5% of media sales reps reported that they met with ego-driven individuals last week, and this did not change much between 2019, 2020, and 2021. Interestingly enough, and sorry to all of the agency media buyers out there, reps reported that many clients in this 5% were agency buyers.

Now, let's look at the percentage of logical buyers. Down 9% from 2020, logical buyers represented 21% of the buyers that your fellow media sales warriors met with last week. These logical buyers typically want nothing but the facts, just the numbers.

And next, and what's really interesting, is the number of emotional buyers—up 9% last week and reported at 74%! You read that right. Seventy-four percent of the media sales warriors I'm regularly coaching are telling me that the buyers they're meeting with right now are highly emotional. This doesn't mean that they don't use any logic in the process of making decisions, but they're showing us that they're very emotional in the way that they're buying. It's a lot about how they feel, regardless of the facts that are being presented to them.

With the knowledge presented here, we have to change how we sell media. If we keep selling traditional media in traditional ways, we will keep getting traditional results. So here are 10 thoughts on changing your media sales approach to increase your close rate as you sell in a post-pandemic media sales world:

1. Emotional buyers do not respond well to data and stats. You will find your best success in selling with advertiser success stories or case studies. Talk up-front about the three advertisers that you love the most and the results they are seeing.
2. Do NOT ask the standard questions you have been asking for years. Why ask what their budget is and reinforce the fact that they have no money to spend? Instead, talk ethically about your other advertisers that are seeing results. Paint them a picture of potential. A better question to ask would be, "Tell me about a local business you feel does a good job of marketing?" Then, talk about what marketing success could look like.
3. Do not try to win the traditional vs. digital argument. Instead, talk about multi-media. Speak to five or six things that other business owners are doing to win. Traditional and digital. Digital is really kind of the bare minimum, actually. We've got to raise the bar or set the bar with our advertisers and prospects, and that's one of the things I want you to seriously consider. As ad sales pros, we've got to control the narrative. Digital-only advertisers limit themselves and their total ROI.
4. Talk about minimums required for ROI success. There is a reality to marketing. There is a dollar value attached to that reality. Show the reality. It might sound something like this, "If you're going to be competitive, there's a certain minimum number of marketing initiatives that you need to do in any given 30-day period just to be competitive." These minimums should be shown in your three pricing plans/packages that you present on every sales call.
5. Come with ideas ready to roll. Most people have lost patience for just about everything. The last thing they want to do is sit through a sales discovery interrogation session. You are 70% more likely to close business when you recommend what somebody needs to do as opposed to what they want to do. Sure, ask questions, but stop being a custom solution builder. There is no proof that custom advertising solutions sell more than recommending what will work for a tested category of your clients. Custom solutions require a higher level of knowledge. They take longer to close. And, they require the most customer support from your team.
6. In a time of crisis, most people want to be led. So lead. You are a Media Sales Advisor. Recommend media options based on what has worked for your other advertisers. I'll reiterate: it's not about budget. It's about what the advertiser's category demands. Identify what they NEED, get them results, and you'll have customers for a lifetime.
7. Social media is not the single answer to marketing. If Coke or Tide could get away with doing only social, they would. Yet, they collectively spend millions each year on traditional media. I might say this to my advertising clients right now, "Mr. or Mrs. Advertiser, so you love social media. Great. We do too. But, pretty much every business is on Facebook. Let's talk about what things you are doing to be different." Because everybody's on social media right now. Social media is really, really saturated. Digital as a whole, quite honestly, is saturated. So the question is, "What are you doing to stand out from the crowd in a digitally cluttered, digitally saturated marketing landscape?" I love digital. But it is not the single holy grail.
8. Digital and social are different. Show the difference. Social is intrusion-based advertising. The digital we sell as a media company is permission-based marketing. If you've watched the Netflix documentary "The Social Dilemma," we've got Apple, iOS, and Chrome about to block all cookies, and in fact, some of those things have already happened. From watching this documentary and from observing numerous other sources as well, I believe we're going to see a traditional media resurgence. Now, is it ever going to be the way that it was in the '80s? No. But neither is the music ever going to be the same.

9. Traditional media is a dominating marketing play. Not everyone can afford print or radio. Every business does social. Not every business does traditional. What's interesting, for those of you who sell traditional advertising, is that we're seeing in almost all of our research that one of the best drivers of social media activity—search activity, Google, etc.—comes from traditional media sources. Look no further than the NNA, Borrell, or the Association of Magazine Media for facts to back this up.
10. Sell the marketing triangle of success? Traditional, digital, and social. Because events aren't really in play right now, stick with these main three now. Yes, there are virtual events and they're working in B2B. But the trifecta right now is going to be social and digital, and then having traditional media in the mix as the differentiating factor. Because, if advertisers want to be dominant in their marketplace, they have to do what others either don't know how to do, or what others think they need to do but can't execute on because of budget or other circumstances.

Media sales warriors, people have been putting off significant buys for quite some time. COVID forced them into that scenario. Now with vaccinations rolling out, with restrictions being lifted, people are going to come back out and buy. The critical question is, "Mr. or Mrs. Business Owner, are you going to be ready?" It doesn't matter if they're local, national, or global. Are they going to be positioned ahead of time to take advantage of the buying bump that's going to occur? Demand for products is going up, and it's going to go up higher than it ever has before. Are they going to be positioned correctly? Think about it, friends. You're dealing with a lot of emotional people—74%, remember. So guide them. Lead them. Help them understand what they need to do to be successful.

You know what I always say, "If ad sales was easy, everybody would be doing it." And they're not. Is that because we're crazy? No. (Well, maybe we are a little bit.) The truth is that we've found careers that will feed our families for a lifetime. And there has never been a better time than now to sell media.

You will find his articles online at the link below

<https://360adsales.com/category/ad-sales-training-blog/>